

7-13 September 1988

A FOCUS MAGAZINES PUBLICATION

DELTA II: ARMALYTE

EXCLUSIVE! Hotshot Elite – ST Black Orchid Kellogg's Tour

Plus . . .

Rambo III, C.I.A., HQ, Battle Chess and Purple Heart previews, Eating Arizona

INSIDE: FREE POSTER OFFER!

THIS WEEK'S TOP



'HANG ON IN THERE...'

ATARI ST screen shots shown.



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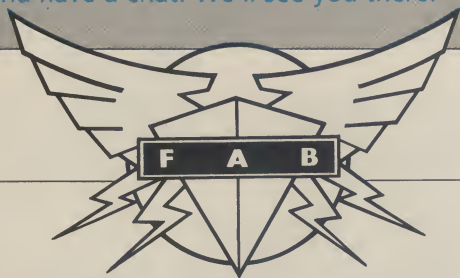


Another week passes in the wild and wonderful world of computer gaming. So what's happening? For one thing all the software houses are working like beserkers to get products ready for the biggest event of the year, the Personal Computer Show. This means virtually no releases until showtime, and also loads of party invites for the Gamesweek team.

Which brings me nicely to our offer on the Letters page or last week's ish; that of a chance to work on our fabby mag while on a JTS/YTS scheme, just as we approach one of the most hectic and exciting times of the year. If you're interested, drop me a line.

What has arrived and is here to stay is C.I.A., or the Computer Information Agency, which will be providing hints and tips, pokes and maps. This is where you come in. Scurry along to page 44 and see how you can make pots of cash. Send us your high scores! You send 'em in, we'll print 'em. And make it worth your while as well. A final point this week. If you want to come and throw things at a dishevelled looking lot at the PC Show, visit the Gamesweek stand. At the weekend I'll be there (wearing dark glasses), and so will the rest of the Focus hacks and hackettes. Tune in and have a chat. We'll see you there.

Duncan Evans



This week we have introduced the Gamesweek awards to honour those crucial pieces of software. A Gamesweek STAR goes to a game demanding instant purchase, while the ultimate accolade, the Gamesweek FAB award goes to games which are so awesome they're a religious experience.



● **Would-be Generals** check-out HQ page 28

6 News

Rex, the thick-skinned mercenary, leers about a bit, and big bucks from Ocean, and all the week's news from Billy 'it's your round' MacInnes.

10 Up Periscope

Chess gets gory shock with EA's Battle Chess, and Purple Heart gook massacre are the two new games exclusively previewed this week.



● **Elite's back with solid graphics** – page 18

14 Ground Zero

Stand by. Incoming games. Trajectories plotted. Impact!

14 Hotshot

Weird but wonderful. Pinball meets Breakout with a vacuum cleaner and blows your head off. Literally.

14 The Black Orchid

Newcomers Mundane Software take you back to a time where men were real men, women were real women, and the forces of evil were really evil.

16 Vindicator

Multi-load arcade action mixes styles and quality. You might even say, the good, the bad and the ugly.

16 Battlestations

I'll say. A feeble effort gets blown out of the water by the Gamesweek team.

18 Kellogg's tour

Well, it just missed all the coverage on the telly, but if you still have the inclination to cycle, but not the energy, then this could be your lucky week.

18 Elite

It's cool, it's classy, and it's wonderfully solid. Elite reaches the ST some five years after the original BBC version. Jeez, it only seems like yesterday as well.

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22 BombJack

Leaping around, squashing bombs, tinny music playing. It must be the Amiga version of another golden oldie. Our reviewer liked it, so we made him lie down for a while.

22 Wanderer

3-D glasses, dire plot, unimpressive wire frame graphics, but now on the Speccy and Arnold.

27 Powerdrome Poster

Get well and truly posted with the Gamesweek poster offer.

28 HQ

General Lee disappears in the fog of war as he takes on the Frenchies at Waterloo.

30 Adventure Bridge

Tony 'pixie suit' Bridge, a legend in his own codpiece, investigates Legend of the Sword and loads of other stuff. I mean, the guy's got three pages so it's gonna bulge!

33 On Screen

Emma, "why do I have to watch this?" Norman grits her teeth and with moral support suffers the horror of Rambo III in an Odeon with the sound on full blast.

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Francis 'its in the post' Jago reports.

42 Eating Arizona

It's wild, it's wacky, it's supper time in the Sahara. Brendon 'cobweb' Gore shakes down Crash, the first computer generated novel.

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Welcome to the Computer Information Agency. Hit p. 44 for hints and tips for the latest games. Scan how to earn yourself a big pile of cash.

45 Letters

I hate you all, you're great, where can I get a good joystick from, and other comments splatter across the Letters page.

24 Delta II: Armalyte

This is more like it. Scroll, kill, scroll, kill. The sequel to Delta, but with a bit of originality. Fab music, ace sprites, and party time in mega blast city.

27 Chopper

Zeppelin Games trundle out another budget blast. Better than a poke in the eye with a blunt sheep? Maybe.

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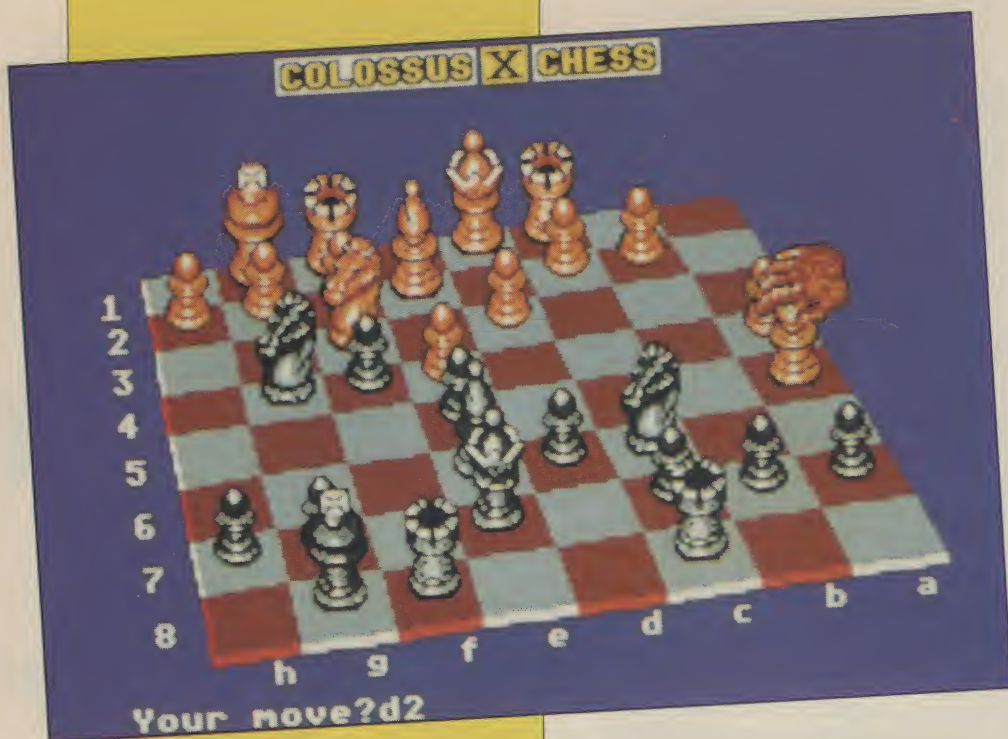
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LAST
S
O
E



Has Karpov met his match?

Opening moves for Colossus

The producers of the best-selling Colossus Chess 4 for a 8 bit computers, CDS Software, will be launching a 16 bit version at the PC Show.

Colossus Chess X has been fully revised in play and graphics, offers two or three dimensions, four different chess sets, a vast opening book of moves and an infinite number of levels. The game will be on show at the CDS Software stand (3019), which will also feature other Colossus games including Bridge, Mah John, Casino Roulette and Brian Clough's Football Fortunes. Blue Ribbon, the budget label in the same group, will be showing their follow-up to Steve Davis Snooker, the best-selling budget game so far this year.

Colossus Chess X will retail at £24.99 for the ST (available at the end of September) and Amiga (available at the end of November).

World-leaders get the Spitting Image treatment

IT'S BEEN A BUSY time for Domark these last few weeks. Not only is it planning to produce a follow-up to Trivial Pursuit, it is also set to release

two games with film tie-ins later this year. As if all that wasn't enough, the company has also secured the rights to those anarchic funsters at Spitting Image.

The Spitting Image we all know and love will now be available as a no-holds barred game of fun and enjoyment for your computer. Design Design are programming the game and are working closely not only with Domark, but also with the show's script writers.

Your task is a simple one, namely to save the world. Six characters are out to take over the earth, these are: the Pope, the Ayatollah, Gorbachev, Thatcher, Botha and Ronald Macdonald. A great war is due to take place in seven years, it is your objective to make sure that the victorious leader is stopped. The backdrops include the Cabinet gambling, a Cardinal at the Vatican stealing money from a peasant, and queues at the Kremlin.

The programming is replete with V-signs, bums, the odd naughty word, the Moscow Disco Dancing Championships, and lots of other wild and wacky things. The game will be available for all major 8 and 16 bit computers in the last quarter of the year. A must for all Carry On fans by the sound of it!

Hairy athletes and high-tech wargames

ELECTRONIC ARTS HAVE announced several new releases for the coming months. Amongst them will be an Olympic game with a difference, Caveman Ugh. Lym-



NEWS

Gamesweek on the street

pics, where the all-time great Neanderthal athletes (for some reason the Gamesweek team are not included) compete for medals in events such as clubbing, dino-vaulting, sabre-toothed tiger racing and fire starting. The game will be available for the C64 disk (£14.95) in October.

Modem Wars is the first game specifically designed for modems which allows C64 owners to play against IBM and Apple II owners. A fast-paced strategy/action game in which players can randomly generate millions of different battlefields full of trees, hills, rivers and plains, **Modem Wars** has five progressive complex modes.

All games are timed and wins are determined by knockouts or points. From the ComCen (Command Centre) players control artillery, cavalry, infantry and spy units as they seek to defeat a remote opponent in a two player game, or take on the computer in a solo game. The game will be available for the C64 disk (£14.95) in October and the PC (£24.95) in November.

Death, dishonour and intrigue in Imperial Nippon

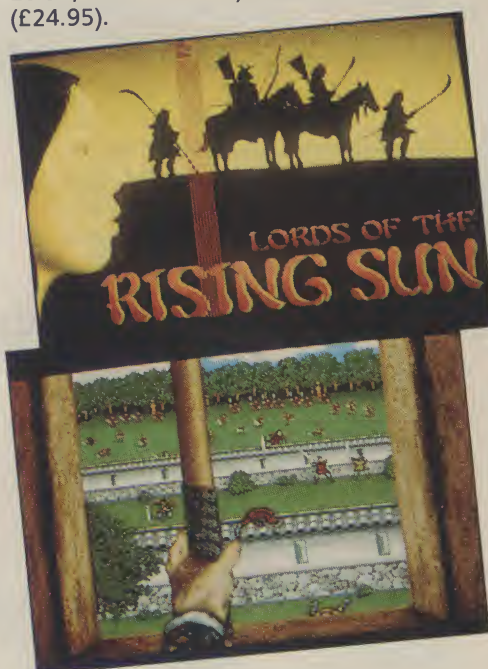
CINEMAWARE WILL BE releasing **Lords of the Rising Sun** in the early new year. Set in twelfth-century Japan, the game casts the player as the leading character in a historical far Eastern epic. Civil war has erupted and your bitter rivals, the Taira clan, have killed your father and subverted the emperor. You begin to realise that these are not good people.

In your attempts to redeem the family honour and become Shogun, you command vast armies of Samurai warriors, defend yourself against Ninja assassins, negotiate alliances with other clans and confront enemies in personal combat. The game features a three screen wide map of medieval Japan and "breathtaking graphics". It will be released initially for the Amiga (£24.99), to be followed by the C64, the IBM and the ST.

Big bucks prize from Ocean

NEW OF ANOTHER game with a television tie-in, of a different sort, was revealed this week. Ocean software, the software house based in Manchester, has been commissioned by Scottish Television to build an exclusive format of the coin-operated arcade game, **Typhoon**, capable of fitting into a small suitcase.

Worth over £1000, it will be offered as a special prize on the ITV network game show, **Wheel Of Fortune**. For us lesser mortals, Ocean will be releasing the **Typhoon** program this month. It will be available for Spectrum (tape £7.95, disk £14.95), Commodore 64/128 (tape £8.95, disk £12.95), Amstrad CPC (tape £8.95, disk £14.95) and the Amiga (£24.95).



The way of the warrior!

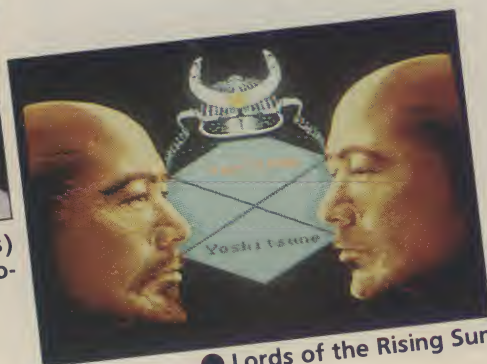
Software start-up offer budget range

KIXX IS A NEW name in software whose stated aim is to offer "top quality software at a pocket money price". Kixx will release products culled from the U.S. Gold and Gremlin catalogue. Initially, these will be re-issued titles, but future Kixx releases will include original games developed especially for the company.

The first original program will be **Blackbeard**, which will be available for Spectrum, Amstrad and MSX machines in October this year. Most of the products scheduled for release this year, which include **Gauntlet**, **Metrocross**, **Krackout** and **Leaderboard**, will retail at £2.99.



● Some famous (and infamous) names help to promote the new Do-mark game

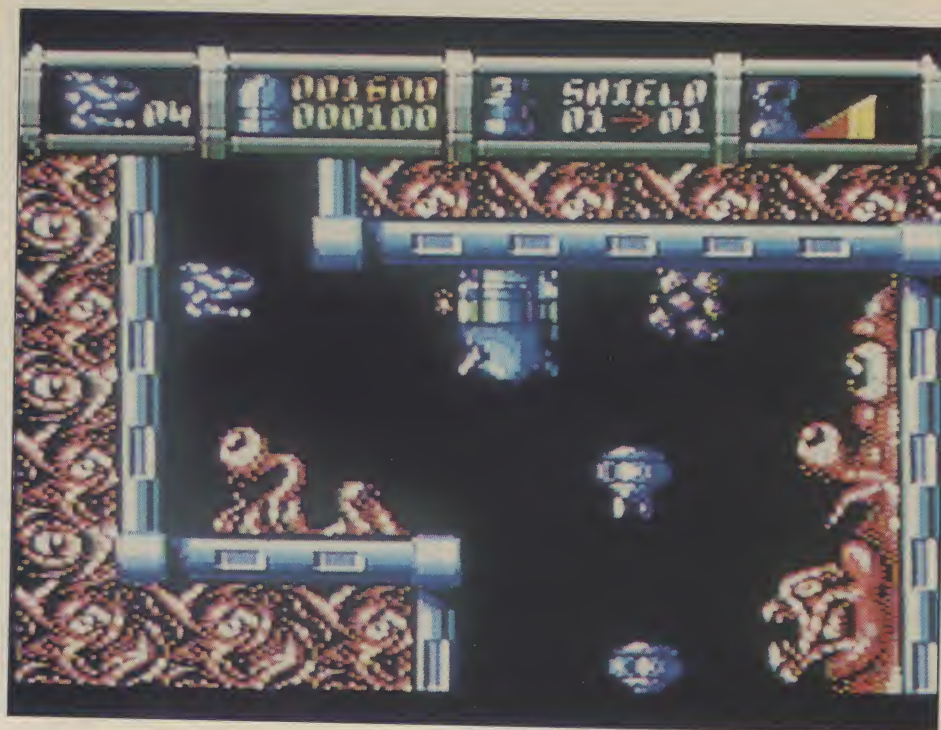


● Lords of the Rising Sun

Wild savage in axe attack frenzy

SAVAGE IS A new game from Firebird for all you romantics out there. **Savage**, the ultimate destroying machine (where have we heard that before?), is driven by a single mission, to rescue his loved one.

Fuelled by rage (well it wouldn't be shredded wheat would it?), **Savage** plunges into battle wielding his huge axe. In a frenzy, he wreaks havoc on any who come within range. **Savage** must smash his way out of infested dungeons, negotiating traps and annihilating ghastly mutants. Once out of there, he enters Death Valley where he must fight giant monoliths and deathly ghosts. **Savage** is a multi-load game with three thrilling scenarios. It will be available for the Spectrum (£8.99), C64 (£12.99 disc/£9.99 cassette) and Amstrad (£14.99 disc/£8.99 cass.) on November 2. It is also due for release for the Amiga, ST and PC soon.



The ultimate killing machine returns

HEWSON HAS COMMISSIONED a sequel to their chart success, **Cybernoid the Fighting Machine**, which is due for release on September 20. **Cybernoid II - The Revenge** will feature all new graphics by top artist Hugh Binns, as well as major new weapons systems for all you trigger-happy games players. The weapons

systems will include edge following bombs, time bombs, smart bombs and a Cybernoid drone ship (only on the Spectrum). The game will also feature new static features and new alien features. **Cybernoid II** will be available for the Spectrum (£7.99 cassette/£12.99 disc), Amstrad (£9.99 cassette/£14.99 disc) and C64 (£9.99 cassette/£14.99 disc). Versions for the ST and the Amiga are due for release at the end of November. Hewson will also be releasing **ZYNAPS** for the ST and the Amiga within the next couple of days.



Gun-nut on the loose

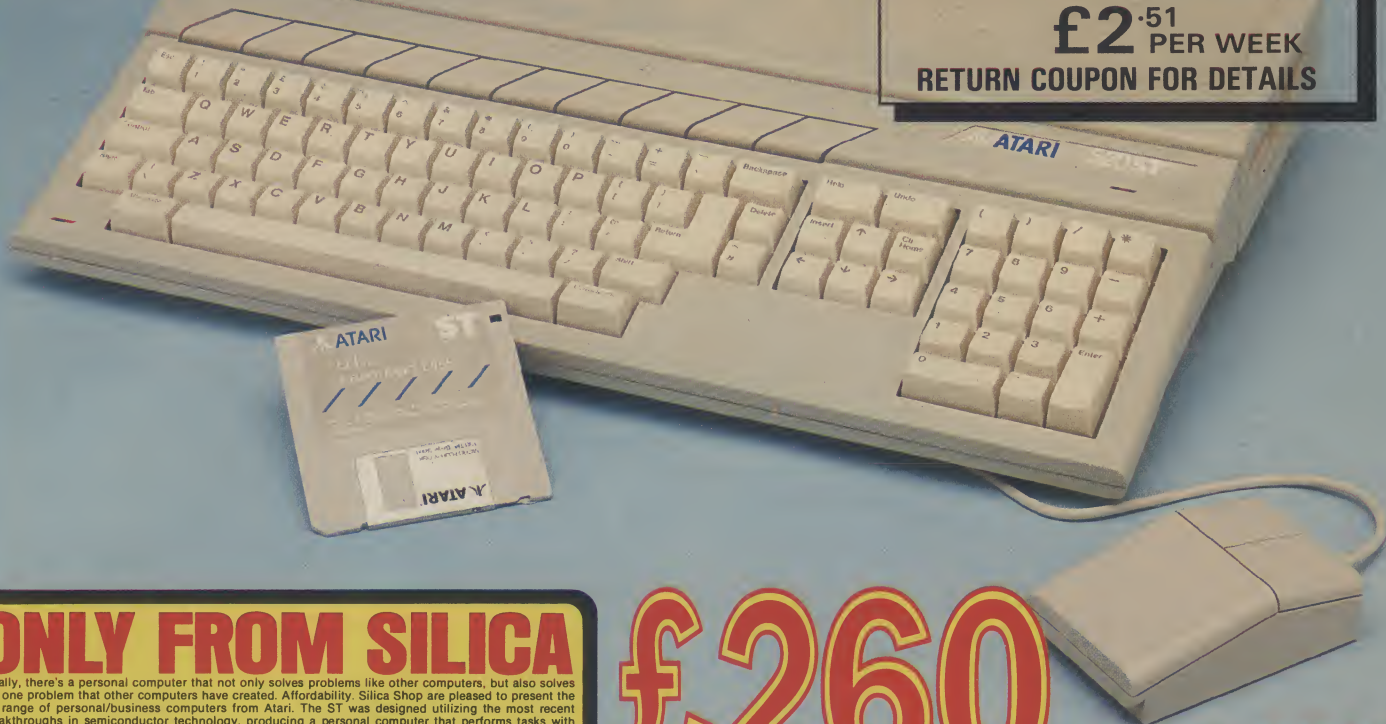
Meeet Rex from Martech. Rex is a thick skinned, piggy-eyed mercenary with no friends, and you're him.

Rex has come to the city of Zenith to do away with the capitalistic, uncaring, polluting humans (watch out Maggie!) who have built their fortunes around The Great Tower. He's come equipped with more weapons than the labour front bench - not that difficult at the moment - and he was to fight his way through an underground cave system to get to the weak point of the tower. Once he is there, Rex has to set the charges and get out quick.

Rex is a Spectrum multiload game with 128k sound and will be available at the end of September. It will retail at £8.99 (casstte) and £14.99 (disc).

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Up

DER

New Games
surfacing
on the
horizon
are
previewed
by the
C.G.W
crew.

Battle Chess, produced by Electronic Arts and available for the Amiga in late November, is an attempt to update one of the oldest games in the world to fit one of the newest forms of entertainment, computer games. On the evidence of this preview, it does it quite successfully. Whether this is what chess needs, however, is an entirely different question.

The Amiga demonstration had very impressive graphics, with each piece given its own characteristics. The rooks, for example, were great brick towers which evolved into creatures akin to Thing from the Fantastic Four when they moved. In the demonstration, a pawn was unlucky enough to be taken by a rook. The process was complicated but amusing.



Mortal combat on the chessboard

one leg for a few seconds) and then the rest of him.

The queen moved to take a bishop, her hips swaying pronouncedly. When she reached the cowering cleric, she raised her arms aloft and cast a spell which turned him into a heap of bones. All of this is very entertaining and helps to make

Battle Chess

The pawn tried to run away, but couldn't leave his square. He then tried to placate the rook towering over him by throwing away his staff and making conciliatory gestures. All to no avail. The rook raised a mighty arm and clubbed the poor soul into the ground. Cruel.

Even worse was to come. The very next move one knight took another knight. They had a bit of a sword fight during which the losing knight lost both his arms, both his legs (he hopped up and down on

chess more interesting, however, the entertainment novelty soon wears off. While it is still fresh there is no doubt that it can be highly distracting. I wouldn't be surprised if people deliberately went out to take pieces rather than to win the game. So the strategy element goes right out the window. That said, a player can also play the game in two-dimensional mode.

Don't get me wrong, the game looks absolutely amazing, and it will probably get people to play chess



SCORE

who would normally be as likely to make contact with a bishop as the devil himself. Therein lies the major problem. People will play it as a computer game, rather than for the game that it is. Anyone who plays chess regularly will soon get sick of the taking manoeuvres and will probably switch to the two-dimensional mode. In which case, what price those gorgeous graphics?

Seen one *Commando* game and you've seen them all. Right? Right! Horizontally scrolling, vertically scrolling, run, shoot, collect weapons, shoot some more.

Well, here's another one. This time from CRL, and called appropriately enough *Purple Heart*. Your mission, should you choose to accept it (Jim) is to penetrate deep into enemy territory, and attempt to blow up the enemy gun emplacements at the end of each of the six



● Machine gun etiquette

Purple Heart



● Meet one of the well-armed protagonists from Purple Heart

levels. Oh, and kill anyone who gets in the way as well.

To facilitate the carnage, there is a choice of weapons. Just nip into the local store and get yourself a shiny new rifle (pah!), machine gun (hur hur), flamethrower (watch em burn) and rocket launcher (whoosh boom!). Actually they're just lying around waiting to be filched.

While the rocket launcher and flamethrower may be the most exciting to lay into gooks with, any-

one at close range is likely to stick you one. Thus for the most part you'll want to wade through the cannon ladder with a machine gun. Nice, neat and ever so right for cutting a bloody swathe through the enemy ranks.

Is it vertical scroller (*Rambo Commando*) or a sideways shifter (*Predator*) you're asking: and seeing as those are good questions I'll answer them thusly: both.

Half the time you rampage up the

screen letting fly, etc, until you find your path obstructed, then to the left or right you must go, until it's time to stride manfully up the screen once more.

At the start of this socially aware effort you get to select which character you want to go gunning with.



If two people are playing then it's simultaneous play time.

Besides the opposition firing back the other worries in this game are the enemy emplacements at the end of each level, which are tough, and the various armoured vehicles, such as tanks, trundling around.

If you want to see whether CRL has managed to breath new air into a tired game, check out *Purple Heart* when it is released in October.

At least the gameplay is crisp and the graphics are excellently done.

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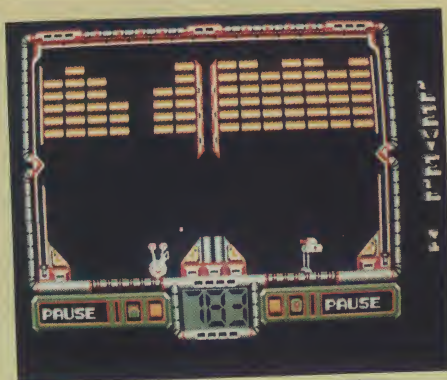
Commodore



Welcome to Ground Zero, where we monitor the latest incoming games

Hotshot, written by Addictive games and supplied by Prism, is a brilliant arcade game, not just because it is the only game I've ever been able to beat the Editor (Bah! Ed) at, but because it proves that you can actually have an enjoyable time without chopping off peoples' heads, maiming or plain dull killing.

The game is a cross between pinball and *Breakout*, namely that



you fire balls at round objects, or bricks and thereby score points. Play is simultaneous against either the computer or a friend.

There are five levels interspersed with bonus levels which are basically a case of luck. No level can be obtained without having completed the previous level and obtaining the necessary amount of points; which is much harder than it may seem, as the required number of points are astronomically high. The only failing is that if you reach the third stage and are playing against the comput-

er, it seems to have far more lives than you do. It poses the question, just how many balls does a robot have?



The first level is timed, you have to shoot enough balls to earn over 1000 points before you can progress to the bonus level. If you don't reach 4000 at that level then the game is over. The other stages follow this pattern, except it is no longer a matter of timing but lives lost.



This may not sound exciting, but *Hotshot* shows more imagination than most games for quite some time. There are six different characters that you can be; Triffid, who's a robotic little lump on long legs with a sort of spanner-like object hanging in between (at least that's what I thought it was), and catches the ball with his long red nose. Wobbly, who is my favourite, is a little fat thing with no legs, a long snout and eyes on stalks. There

F A X B O X

Program: Hotshot
Version: ST
Price: £19.95
Supplier: Prism
Reviewer: Emma Norman

RELEASE DATES

ST: Out now
Spectrum: Out now

Once again, dear reader, you are needed in a far-off land, where the forces of evil are threatening to take over the entire area and subject it to a tyrannical reign of terror. No, not the Falklands, silly! Got your double-bladed hand axe ready yet? And your shield and studded armlets? Good!

You must capture one-half of the *Black Orchid* staff (you have the other half). This can be found in the Evil forces' tower. Once you have both pieces, then you will have control over the land. You must bear in mind the fact that the Evil forces aren't about to give up one-half of the staff without a jolly good fight, so there will be some blood spilt.

You choose to take the role of either a female or a male leader. You must recruit men (or women) to form your armies, in order to capture the various provinces. The problem is that manpower costs money, and as you only have se-

venty-five gold pieces to start with, you will not be able to buy much at first.

In choosing your characters, there are a variety of factors to influence you; each character has different attributes, such as combat skill, weaponry, alignment (good, evil, or neutral) and, of course, cost. The better a character is, the more he or she will cost in proportion. There

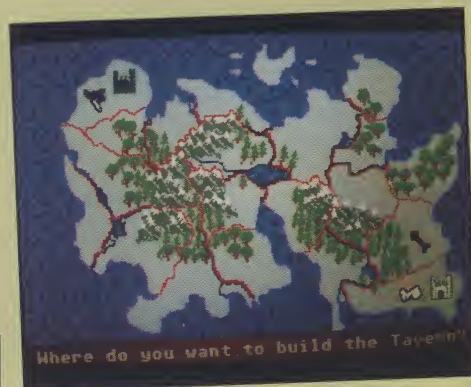
F A X B O X

Program: Black Orchid
Version: ST
Price: £19.99
Supplier: Mundane Software, PO Box 180, Bath BA1 2WF
Reviewer: Andrew Marshall

RELEASE DATES

ST: September

are over seventy characters to choose from, and each one has his or her own picture, displayed in the top left-hand corner of the screen. This lets you see what you are just



Enter the world of Black Orchid from Mundane Software

about to spend your hard-earned readies on.

After selecting your troops, you must move them into neighbouring provinces to collect the revenue that the province offers. Troop manoeuvres are done at the end of a turn, so make sure you have finished your go before selecting 'end turn' as this decision is irreversible.

What would a role playing game be without a little magic? Sure enough, this game has a magic

Ground

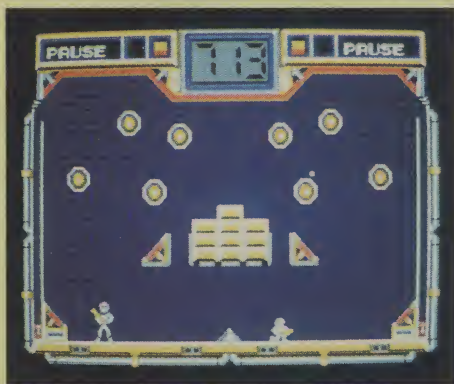
is also Ninja, who is completely black and a little difficult to see except for his eyes which are bright red – comes of playing pinball all his life, no doubt. Bud, an ordinary sort of bloke, except he constantly waves a cricket bat around, Maxx, who looks something like Darth Vader and Tojoi, who has an unnerving habit of shooting himself in the foot. Maxx and Wobbly are also partial to this, but not to the same extent.

There are all sorts of surprises in store. For example, should you shoot a way through the bricks to

the ceiling, a conveyor belt starts under the opposing player, making it very difficult for them to shoot straight while being yanked backwards and forwards.

The game is highly addictive, and requires a certain degree of skill. Well, practice really. But I suggest you put your joystick hand into training before playing as it requires a great deal of thumb power.

It's a fantastic game anyway, and for those of you who miss the killing aspect, never fear, when you fail to catch the ball your head is blown off.



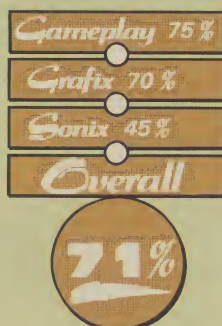
screen, in which you can select one of a number of spells. Once selected, you will be given a brief description of its effect before use. Each spell requires a certain number of magic points. Putting a curse on someone is easy, but bringing someone back from the grave is another matter. With these spells you can fry your enemies with a fireball, or shake them up with a San Andreas Special aka tremor. There are also beneficial spells, such as cure, heal, charm and life, to help your own hard-pressed hordes.

Battles occur when you position your army in a province controlled by the enemy. The map screen is replaced by the battle screen, which displays the combatants on the field. Each combatant has a number

showing the amount of men available.

This game reminds me somewhat of *Defender of the Crown* in its province gaining aspect and also of the *Ultima* series, in its role playing aspect, but lacks the sheer polish of either. I liked the character histories available, as this gives the game some depth. There are also lots of character pictures to see; however, the battle screen is rather less than bloodthirsty, although it shows quite clearly how the battle is progressing.

Although *Black Orchid* is by no means a big budget production, it could end up being a cult success for Mundane Software.



Reviews

The earth has been laid waste by invaders from a distant planet yet again. Mankind has only just survived. Surprise, surprise. Guess what? You survived too, and now you're just itching to go get some revenge? Aren't you?

No, neither am I. After playing the first part of *Vindicator* I was left wishing that just for once the aliens could do the job of totally destroying the earth properly. The first level is a tragedy which is best hidden from the sight of men. I won't say that it's close to impossible, or difficult, or mind-numbingly dull,

FAX BOX

Program: Vindicator
Supplier: Ocean Software
Format: C64
Price: £12.95 (disc)
Reviewer: Billy MacInnes

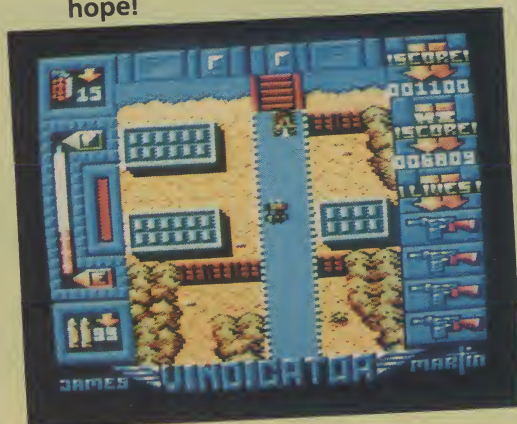
RELEASE DATES

C64: Out now
Amstrad CPC: Out now

because that would be too easy. Let me tell you what you have to do. You have to battle your way through four levels of tortuous mazes to find the computer rooms which will give you the locations of the hidden bomb components. Then you blow the maze.

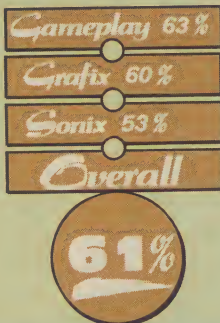
The second level is much better. It's still difficult though. You are now placed in charge of a fighter plane and you set about strafing the bad guys to clear a path for you to drive down in your jeep. You blast your way through to the catacombs, where you have to face the Mutoid Guardian. And so to the final section, which sees you deep in the bowels of the earth taking on mu-

The Vindicator – Mankind's last hope!



tant hordes to reach the evil Gog's (who thinks up these names?) lair. Once you've done him good and proper, you've won.

Well, that sure was worth it, wasn't it? One thing worth pointing out about this game is the quality contrast between the three sections. They are all difficult, but the first level is just silly. The other two look pretty good, and are reasonably good fun to play, but you have to get there first. That's the most difficult part of all.



Does anyone hear that low wailing sound? Can you hear it now? You know what that is, don't you? No, it's not a siren, it's me. I know it doesn't sound human, but neither will you – after you've played *Battlestations*. You have been warned.

Let's take a stroll around the deck, while I tell you all about this game. The scenario goes like this: you're on board this battleship, in a harbour, when all these hostile aircraft attack you. Well, so would any sensible person. I mean, a battleship stuck in a harbour, talk about a sitting duck.

So anyway, there you are sitting on this duck, with all these hostile aircraft flying around taking potshots at you. Sounds like fun,

FAX BOX

Program: Battlestations
Supplier: Prism Leisure
Format: C64
Price: £2.99
Reviewer: Billy MacInnes

RELEASE DATES

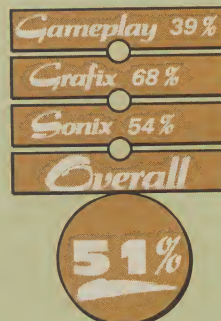
C64: Out now

doesn't it? You are allowed to fire back, for all the good it will do you. Almost as soon as the game begins your ship gets hit. I neglected to mention that you have a radar screen, which is meant to help you spot the enemy planes as they begin their attack. It does work, it's just that while you're trying to zap one lot, your ship will get hit by some other geezers. First lesson for prospective captains of battleships, never, but never, get stuck in a harbour when a lot of bad guys are

attacking you. It'll only end in tears.

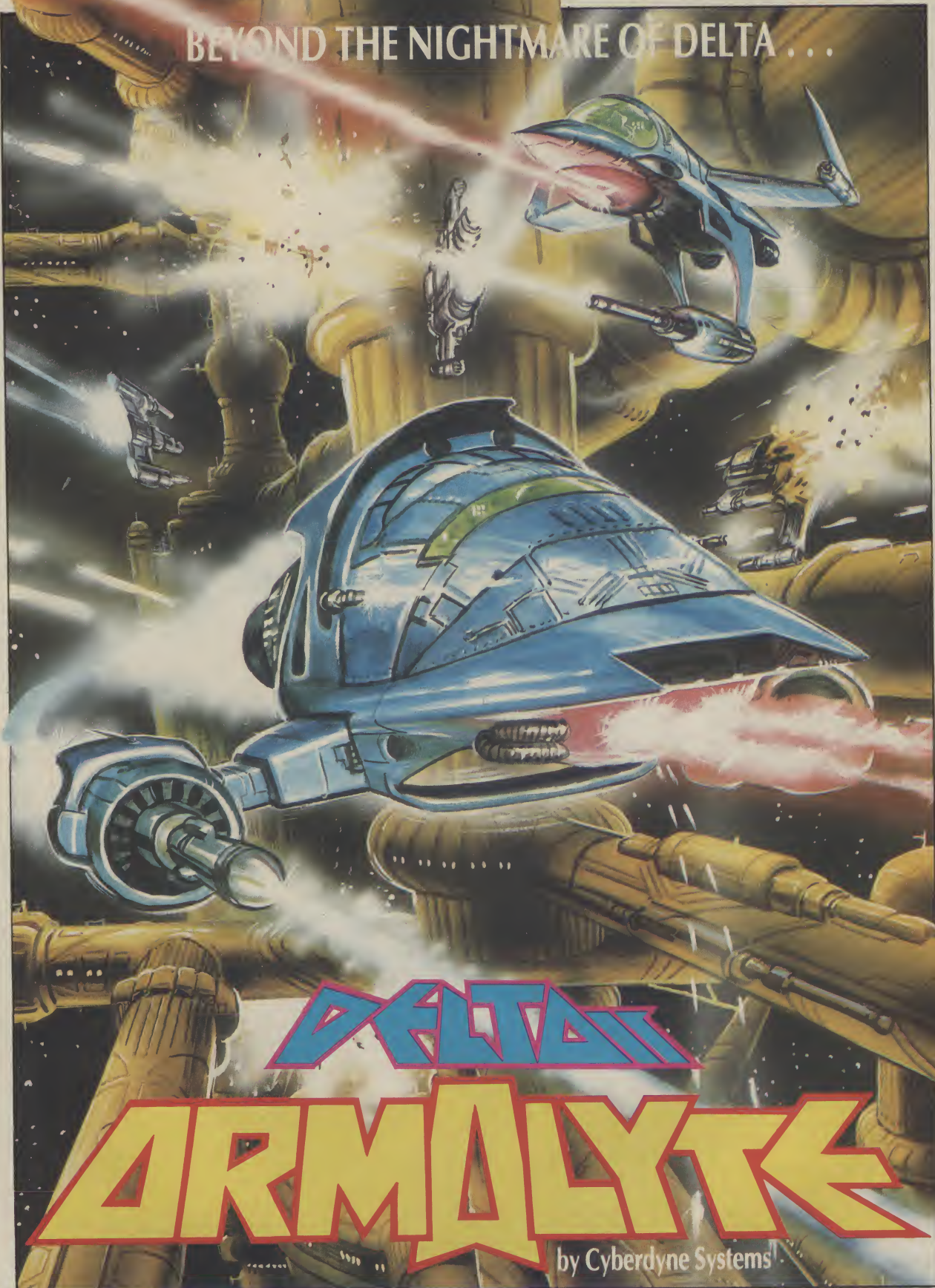
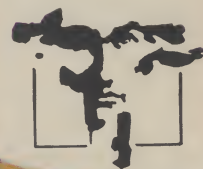
Anyway, fate takes its course, your ship gets hit a lot of times and you sink. Some battle! Still, at least you get to take some of them with you before you make your way to a watery grave in Davy Jones' Locker.

I knew this was going to be one of those games as soon as I saw the facetious messages at the beginning. There are some good points; the graphics aren't bad at all, for example, but all in all I'd rather be in Philadelphia.



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t was five years ago. It was on the BBC B of all things. It was the game of a lifetime. It was a sensation.

That game was *Elite*. In all the years since the release of the original version there has never been a space game to touch it. This autumn, though, there could be, in the form of Firebird's own *Frontier* (previously known as *EPT* and *S.T.A.R.* and still not finished) and Gremlin's *Federation of Free Traders*, so it's good to see the final swansong, in this ST incarnation, of one of the greatest pieces of software ever.

It's all about making credits, of course, and flying round the galaxies, trading goods, customising your ship and becoming anything other than rated harmless. Or even, if you have plenty of patience, trying to achieve the ultimate accolade of being FAB rated. Whoops, sorry, that's our award, isn't it. The objective is to become Elite, as I know you already know.

One of the first changes you're likely to notice is that the main menu screen has been completely redesigned, and all the major op-

tions are available from a panel at the bottom of the screen.

While docked at the space station orbiting a planet you can basically buy and sell goods, get info on any planet in the galaxy, and equip your ship with something better than the three missiles and pulse laser that come as standard. Many of the subsequent menus look completely different from the original game as they are icon driven, and very gaudily, too.

As far as controlling the cursor goes, and your ship when out of the space station, you can use the mouse, keyboard or joystick, and tamper with the responses.

Trading is the only option viable to a harmless rated player, as if you

● **Elite, still good after all these years**



F A X B O X

Program: Elite
Version: ST
Price: £24.95
Supplier: Firebird
Reviewer: Duncan Evans

RELEASE DATES

ST: October



embark upon a life of piracy, it'll be a pretty short life without an energy generator, a military laser or two,

he cover for the *Kellogg's Tour* game contains the following words, "realistic fast action simulation", which is

about right – if not quite in the way that the suppliers intended. Everyone knows that the tour of Britain is a really hard slog – even in a car – but before I played this game I never

F A X B O X

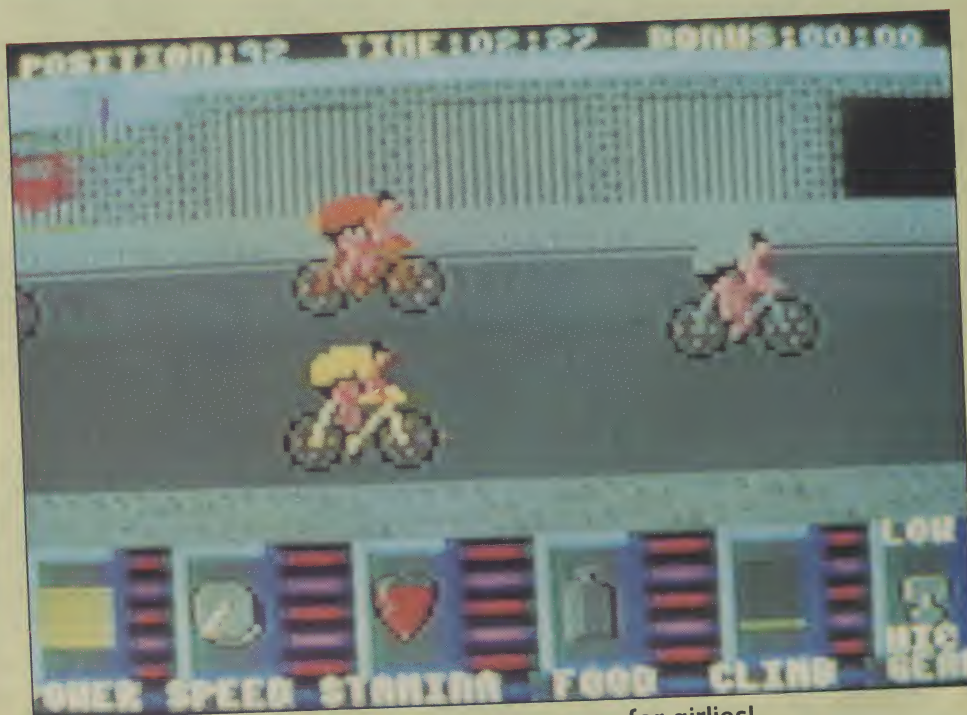
Program: Kellogg's Tour
Version: C64
Price: £14.95
Supplier: CRL
Reviewer: Billy MacInnes

RELEASE DATES

C64: Out now

really knew how it felt. Boy, did I suffer. I know what you're thinking – "what a wimp" is probably the polite way of putting it – but believe me people, this one is tough.

Do you want to know why? It's not the racing, or the climbing, or



● **Join the iron men of sport – it's not a game for girls!**

the sprinting, or the stamina sapping endurance test of completing every stage. No, sirree. It ain't even

the mountains. It's the wagging.

The what? The wagging of the joystick. By the time I finished each



smart bomb, ECH and maybe an escape pod, and all that costs a lot of money.

So you buy and sell the appropriate produce between industrial and agricultural world of fairly stable governments, and save the gun and

stage I was exhausted from all that joystick wagging. My arm was aching, my head was spinning (I must stop drinking the coffee they serve around here) and I wanted to rest for a week. Between each stage. Compared to this the real thing must be a doddle.

Once you have developed the necessary biceps and triceps to compete successfully in this game, and star in the next Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, then the game is really quite enjoyable.

The race begins in Newcastle



● Map showing all six stages of the tour

drug running to anarchy systems for later.

The most vicious way to make money is to buy a debris scoop to fit on the front of your ship. This serves two purposes, the first being that you can skim the local sun for fuel (which is fairly dangerous). The second is that should you waste some other space jock the contents

with a four mile time trial to decide your starting position. There are six stages which take you from Newcastle to London. The object of the game is to be first across the line in the fastest time. Bonus time can be collected during each stage if you beat the time limits on the TV Sprints sections. Any bonus time collected will be deducted from your overall time at the end of the game.

Your stamina is depleted in proportion to the effort used – you're telling me – and will need replenishing with food. Make sure you don't use up all your food too early, otherwise you will run out of stamina and be unable to finish the race.

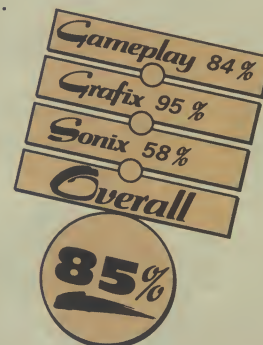
Kellogg's Tour is a very fashion conscious game, being all about winning different coloured jerseys. If you beat the TV Sprints times, you will win a white jersey. If you are in first position at the top of a climb you will be called "King of the Mountain" and "muscle-bound gorilla" and will be awarded a white jersey. If you win a stage, you will be given the yellow jersey, which is

of their cargo bay can usually be found spinning around in space. Chase it down and suck into your cargo bay for clear profit.

The trouble is it gets you a bad reputation and your never know what you're going to pick up.

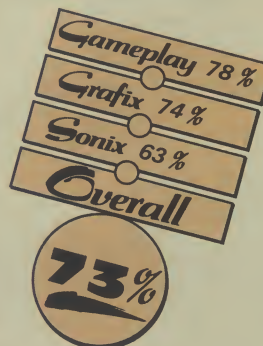
The two most exciting aspects of *ST Elite* are the solid 3-D graphics which are both fast and smooth, and the missions whereby you get hired to perform deeds all over the galaxy.

With the opposition warming up, and looking like they could get a points win at least, every *ST* owner should go for *Elite*, for the simple reason that it's a good game, but also because it happens to be a particularly tasty slice of computing history.



the ultimate accolade. I can't stand yellow myself, so obviously I deliberately made sure that I didn't win one. Surprisingly enough, if you come last you don't get any jersey.

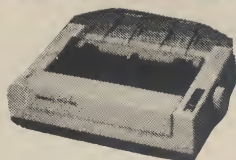
The graphics are good enough with buildings, countryside, other cyclists and the usual paraphernalia associated with the Tour, showing up quite well. The sound is very inoffensive, but then there really aren't that many sound effects that you can have with a bicycle race. Besides, the clattering of my joystick and the anguished cries I uttered were more than enough sound for me – and the rest of the office.





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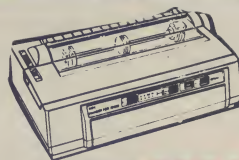
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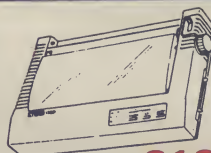


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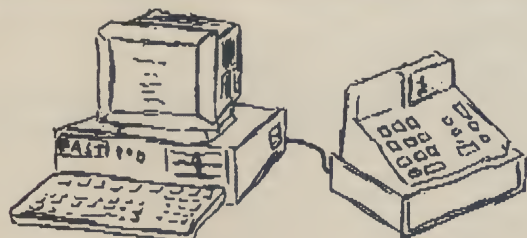
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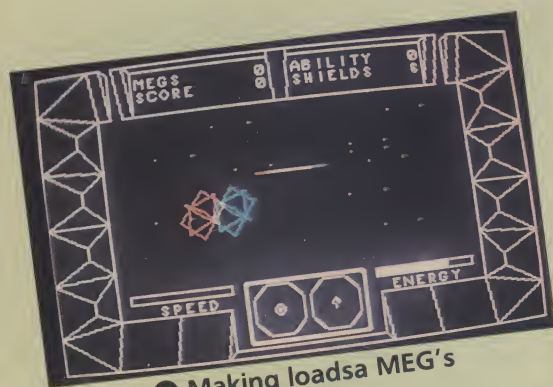
Those with long memories will remember this program, originally running on the ST, when it was available from French software house Pyramide. You might also remember the silly plot about cats being stolen all across the galaxy, the wacky 3-D glasses free with every copy, and the resulting eyestrain after half an hour. And there was a game of poker thrown in as well.

Well, the good news is that Elite has got the rights to the 8-bit

wearing the silly blue and red glasses. On the space war front, there is no impression of heading into space, flying around or anything, just this 3-D image of stars and ships coming towards you slowly.

Point your laser guns and hope to blast them before you fall asleep. Not making enough money and somnolence are the two biggest dangers in this game, although I have heard that action hots up near the centre of the galaxy.

Wanderer was mediocre on the ST almost two years ago so why Elite (the company), especially when it has been releasing some top quality stuff recently, has decided to produce 8-bit versions is mystifying.



● Making loadsa MEG's

versions of *Wanderer* (still with wireframe 3-D glasses) and the plot has been changed (thank the Lord).

Instead of racing round the universe trading poker cards, it now involves racing around trading dis-

F A X B O X

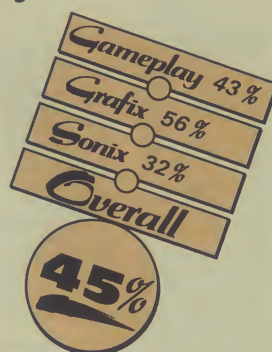
Program: Wanderer
Version: Spectrum
Price: £7.95
Supplier: Elite
Reviewer: Duncan Evans

RELEASE DATES

ST: September
Spectrum: September
CPC: September

rupter units to make loadsaMEGS. MEGS being galactic-speak for dosh, of course.

The idea is to warp from one sector of space, on ye oldie space map, fight off attacks by someone or other, get to a planet and try a spot of trading. Now, don't think this Elite (the game) or anything in the same class, because it isn't. The 3-D aspect is created by using red and blue lines slightly apart, and



Most of you will be familiar with this game from seeing it in your local amusement arcade. The good news is that this is a coin-op conversion which is very faithful to the original.

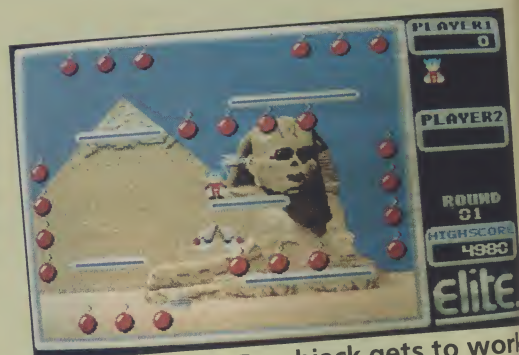
I don't know if there is a story to *BombJack*, perhaps there is, but it is definitely one of those games where any background information is merely a distraction from playing

F A X B O X

Program: BombJack
Supplier: Elite
Format: Amiga
Price: £24.99
Reviewer: Billy MacInnes

RELEASE DATES

Amiga: Out now
ST: Out now
C64: Out now
Spectrum: Out now
Amstrad: Out now



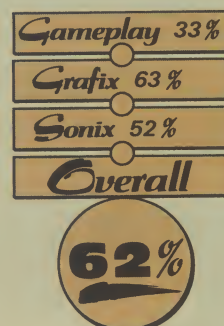
● Lovable little Bombjack gets to work

it. As everyone who hasn't been on another planet for the last couple of years knows, the object of the game is to collect bombs (which look just like cherries) and thus defeat your enemy.



Every now and then a flashing disc appears which will make the bad guys stop in their tracks and turn into things you can eat. Eating them gives you bonus points and gets them out of your hair for a while. The bad guys consist of cute little spacemen that turn into creatures resembling flying seashells when they reach the ground, and a sort of vulture that flies around morosely for a bit, or so it seems to me, before dropping to earth and turning into something else. Make no mistake, though, these guys would like nothing better than to nab you. The bad news is that you can't zap them until the spinning disc turns them into sweeties. Once you have cleared the screen of bombs, you then progress to another locale, with backdrops ranging from the Parthenon to the Pyramids.

As far as *BombJack* is concerned, I have no doubt that familiarity breeds content. After all, he looks so lovable in his little red suit and he is doing a good job. The graphics for the Amiga are on a par with the arcade game, the sound is passable and the gameplay is either addictive or sleep-inducing, depending on your point of view. Speaking for myself, I liked it.



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T

wo hundred years is a long time, unless it involves the plot of a computer game. *Armalyte*, you see is *Delta II*, and

nothing much has changed since *Delta I*.

Delta was all about a region of unknown space called (no prize for guessing this one) Delta Space, in which ships disappeared, aliens did dirty deeds, and the player had to boldly blast where only *Nemesis* had blasted before.

So, 200 years later there's still this area of well known alien space and war breaks out. After the dust has settled everything has gone, except for two giant corporations who take power. One of them penetrates Delta Space to blag alien artifacts, while the other hires two mercenaries to go deep into you know where to steal the artifacts off the other corporation.

Contrived, but it illustrates one of the basic tenets of *Armalyte*; that of simultaneous two player action. Even if you are playing a one player game, the other ship appears on the screen as an automatically firing drone. This can actually be left behind by pressing the space bar, and re-animated by pressing it again. This comes in useful later on as I shall explain at the appropriate point.

If you ever saw the original *Delta* then you'll know what to expect. Fast and furious sideways shooting



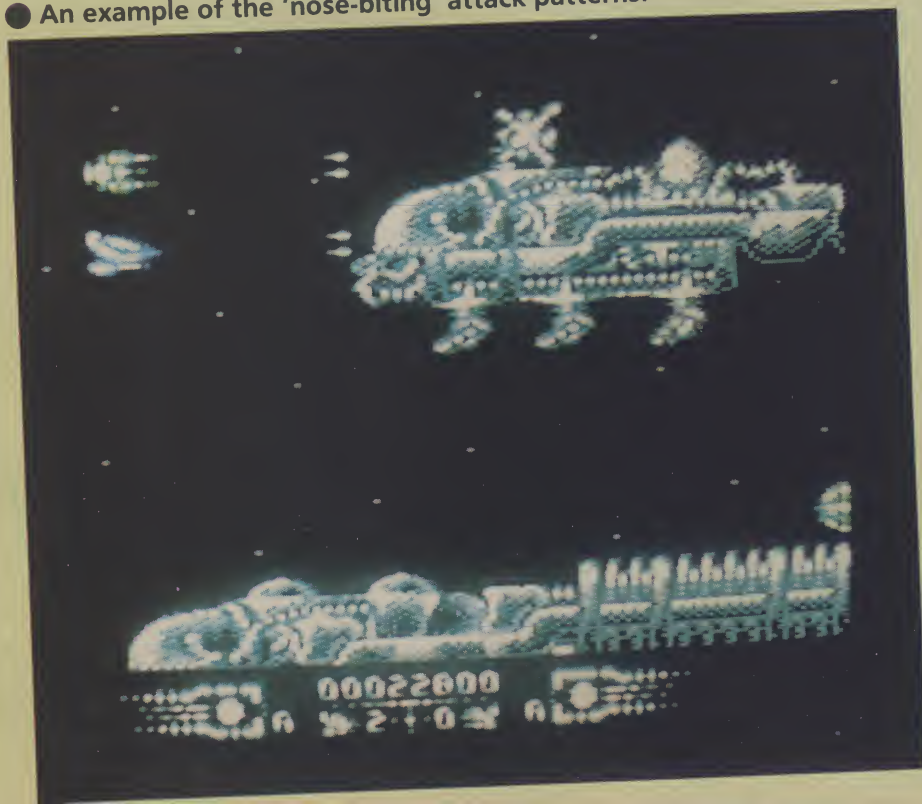
with extra weapons are the basics. Nose biting attack patterns, ear crunching sonics, and sweaty palms are expected extras.

Objective one on *Armalyte* is to sit through all the credits and info on the title screen as this is where the dirt on using the weapons system is dished out. You can also listen to the superbly doomy Carpenter-esque music oozing out of the monitor.

The weapons are more than fairly useful, as you get towards the end of each level they become well crucial, so understanding the overly complicated (this is a blasting game after all) system is essential.

Basically, everytime you see a

● An example of the 'nose-biting' attack patterns!



F A X B O X

Program: Armalyte

Version: C64

Price: £9.95

Supplier: Thalamus

Reviewer: Duncan Evans

RELEASE DATES

C64: September

ST: October

glowing blob (for want of a better word) start shooting it. The number of times you lay into it affects the goodys you get to pick up. There are various super weapons and just plain add ons to be collected, as well as generators and batteries to power afore-mentioned super weapons.

The riff-raff include extra bullets going forwards, back fire, and vertical fire. Which, when you take into account the amount of plasma being hurled around the screen by your standard gun and the drone's

weapons, means that it occasionally becomes a little difficult to see the aliens for the bullets.

The big weapons are converge and trident, which are utilised by holding down the fire button, which sprays ordinary bullets around and then kicks some ass. Its power and recharge rate both being dependent on the number (up to four) of batteries and generators.

Something else you can help yourself to is a munitions pod which gives you a five second shield. But listen Thalamus, it isn't enough. There's so much crap flying around you need a bullet proof jacket just to sit there playing it.

As well as all this there's a big lumpy landscape, scrolling smoothly along, that has defence stations lurking on it, just waiting to give you one in the ram-jet. You can also run into it as well. You may be hard, but the ground's harder, as you'll find out when you fly into a dead end passage. Splat.

There are six levels of mouth drying action, each being concluded with the traditional end of level

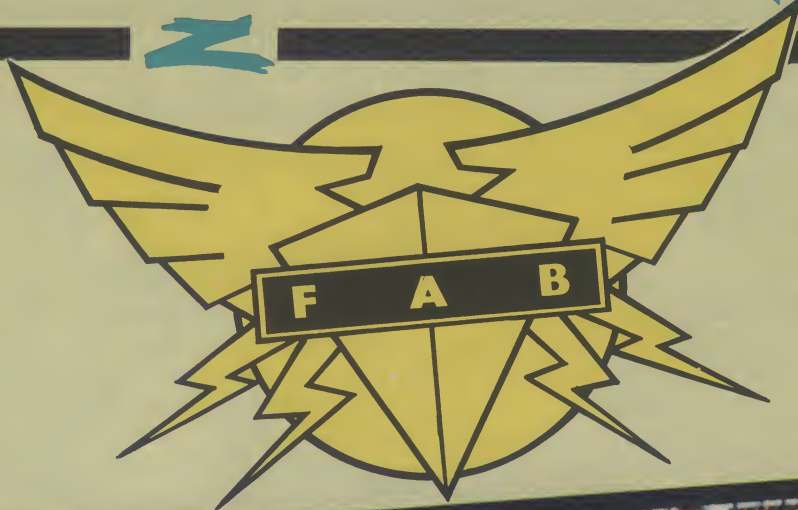
alien, who trogs around doing the biz. This is where the one player has a slight advantage over two player pulverizing.

Drop the drone in the middle of the screen, it continues firing straight ahead, and concentrate on not being run over by the bugger. While you take pot shots at the beastie Mr Drone will stand there impervious to enemy fire by the way, and dish out quite happily.

Now I have heard rumour that **Armalyte** is the right-type of game, if you know what I mean (and I think you do), but that's garbage. **Arma-lyte** is its own game, the action is thicker than our Staff Writer, the sonix are nerve tanglingly stiff, the grafix are slick, and that's good enough for me.

Gameplay 96 %
Grafix 88 %
Sonix 92 %
Overall

93%



● In the thick of the action, our reviewer shows he's got 'the Right Stuff'



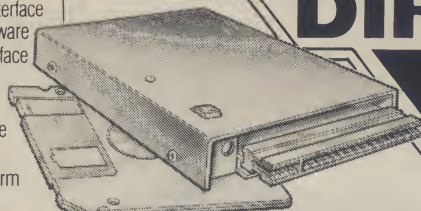
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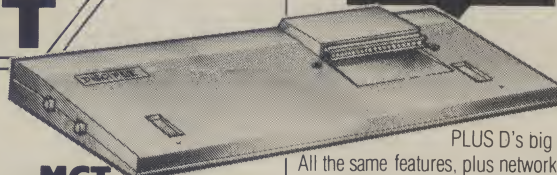


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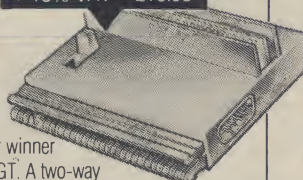


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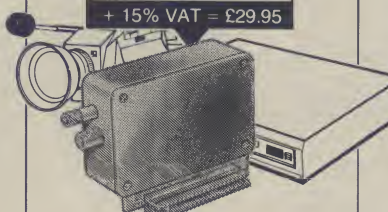
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Imagine yourself far away, in another world, where the people live under the yoke of oppression. No, we are not talking about Gamesweek staff, we are talking about the world of

Chopper Commander. As the rotors whirr, blowing the Ed's wig (you're fired, Billy - Ed.) out of the office, get ready to go out there and do your saviour of the world act. Again. Does anyone know which world it is this time? I get so confused.



So anyway, there you are in a world suffering under the malevolent auspices of the Evil Empire. Your task is to save the populations

of the three independent continents from the invading Empire Troops by preventing them from landing and boarding their tanks. They are the bad guys who are slaughtering the hapless civilians, you are the sole remaining helicopter from your squad who has to take them out of the ball-game.

Once you have destroyed enough of them thar aliens, an alien mother-

F A X B O X

Program: Chopper Commander

Supplier: Zeppelin

Format: C64

Price: £1.99

Reviewer: Billy MacInnes

RELEASE DATES

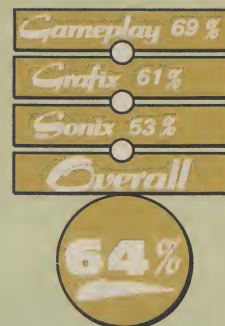
C64: Out now

Amstrad: Out now

ship emerges which you have to wipe out. The burnt out wreckage leaves an anti-tank weapon behind, which is then used to destroy the tanks busy prowling around on the ground. Each time you succeed, the continent gains another person

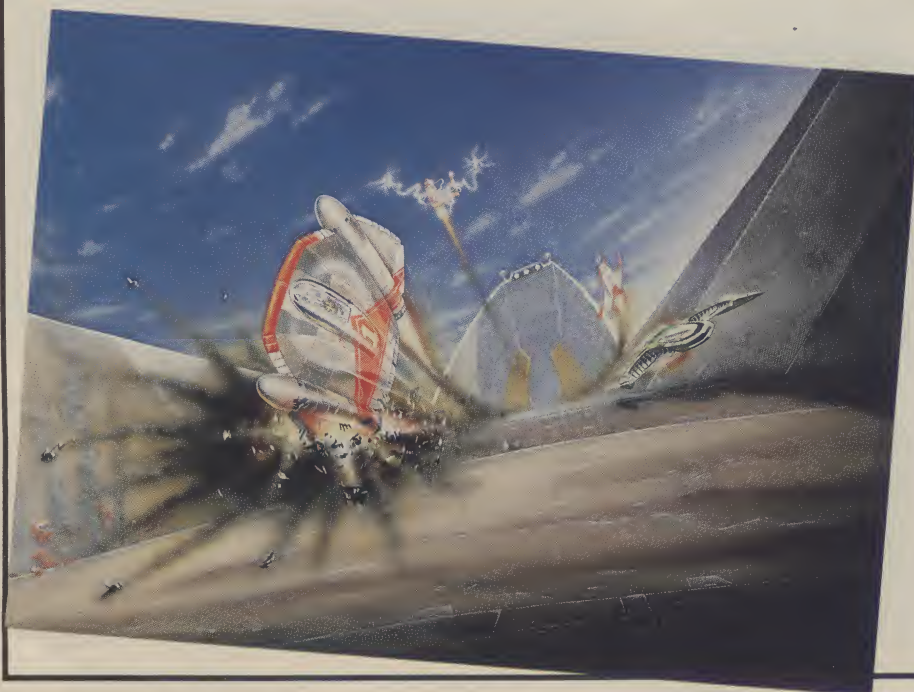
(that's not what they taught us in biology at school, is it?). If you are useless enough to lose all three continents, then you are a failure and how you came to command a chopper squadron is beyond me. It is quite difficult to do, because usually you lose your three lives before you lose the continents.

The gameplay for **Chopper** is fast and furious, but also quite easy. Believe me, if I can get a good score then it must be easy. It is also good fun, for a bit, anyway. As for the graphics, they are nothing to shoot your granny for, but they aren't that bad either. The sound is pretty dull, but at least it won't give you a headache.



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TOKEN 1

It appears that the reorganisation that is going on at Mirrorsoft is more thorough than I first realised. The idea is that all Mirrorsoft's strategy games, including imports, will appear under the PSS label. Other games will come under the Imageworks' banner and the name Mirrorsoft will be retained for business packages. The idea of all this messing about is so that each label gets a strong image, the user knows what to expect, rather than the rather ad hoc style up to now.

One of the releases PSS has coming up is called **Waterloo**. This sounds an interesting concept. It is written by Peter Turcan whose last foray into the computer games world was **Computer Scrabble**. **Waterloo** along with **Borodino** and **Spanish Armada** which are being published by Atari, are considered by Mr. Turcan to herald a new type of strategy game.

One of the recurrent bug-bears of both board and computer wargames is the god-like omniscience of the player – the so-called eyeballs in the sky effect. Anyone who reads an account of any battle from Arbella to Goose Green will realise the profound effect that communications have on the battle. The US armed forces have even elevated it to the status of a science known as Communications Command and Control (C cubed). It is devoted to the way you discover where the enemy is and what he is doing, where your forces are,

Lee Paddon presents a forum for news, views and in depth reviews of strategy and simulation games.

what they are doing and what they should be doing.

This is a whole aspect of military strategy that most wargames have completely ignored. All that tends to happen is that armies with good communications get given higher combat values or "leadership bonuses".

Peter Turcan's answer to all this is to base the whole game around three dimensional perspective views from the viewpoint of the commander in chief. The player then writes commands and messages in fallible English. You then make things worse by giving subordinate units a degree of autonomy (commanders might "misinterpret" your orders or simply disobey them if they think they are particularly suicidal).

It doesn't really take a great deal of head scratching before you realise the enormity of the task of approaching a wargame like this. First off, the graphics. Resolution has got to be extremely good for meaningful information to be gleaned from just looking through a spy glass. Then there's the Parser to be considered. I don't like adventure games for the very good reason that I spend half my time trying to guess the right word. I know what I want to do, I just can't make the computer understand. This is all the fault of a thing called a Parser

which tries to understand English. If you're going to try and write complex orders in English, you're going to need a sophisticated Parser to understand such epics as "third brigade advance slowly northwards. Probe enemy positions but only attack if you have overwhelming superiority."

On top of all this, add the artificial intelligence routines to simulate the various layers of command and the magnitude of the challenge becomes apparent.

It comes as no surprise therefore to learn that Mr. Turcan is limiting himself to Atari ST,



Amiga and PC formats due to memory and graphics limitations of the eight bit machines. If, however, you own a Commodore 64, you can enjoy the dubious privilege of trying to keep unruly armies under control. SSG, an Australian company whose products are imported by Electronic Arts, takes a less

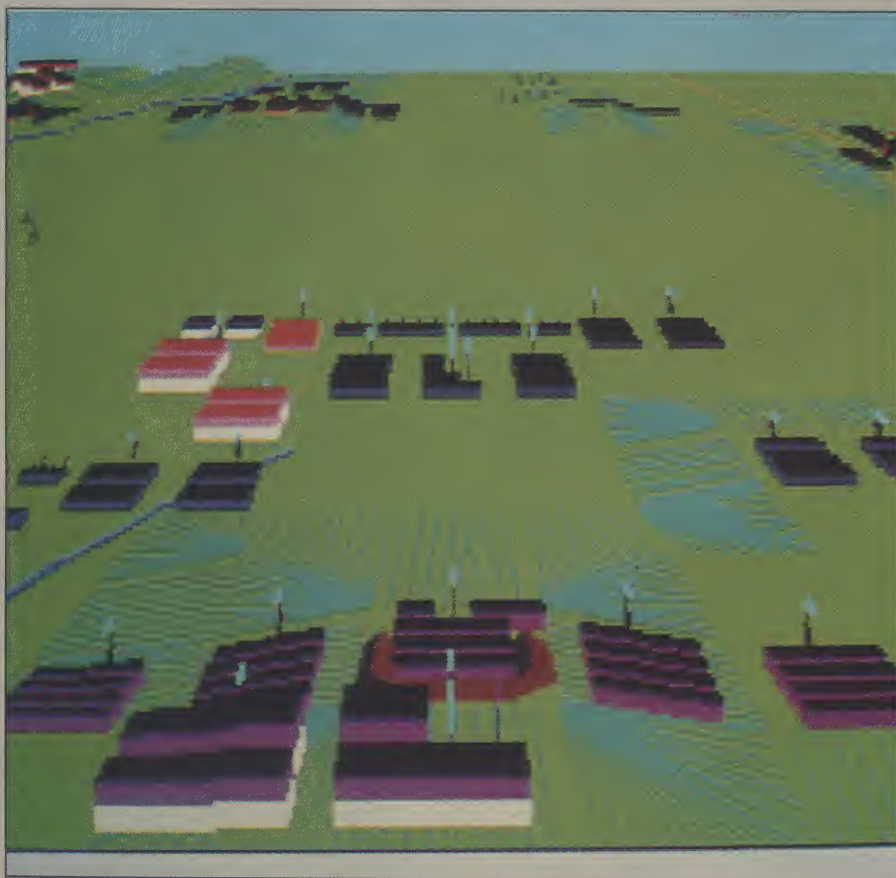
ambitious approach to the C cubed problem. Its latest release is called "**Decisive Battles of the American Civil War Volume Two**".

Aimed firmly at the US market where this war is extremely popular with wargamers, it might be of some interest to those of us who are curious to find out what those unruly colonials got up to after we'd left.

I haven't had a chance to full assess this game yet, but on the surface it looks promising. Presentation is superb with a full colour map of the five battlefields, a comprehensive instruction manual and prompt cards to aid the player through the mass of menus. If you like playing god, you can turn on the "radio" and "exposed" options. This gives the player the ability to control every single unit on the map and see where every enemy unit is. However, for the real fog of war feeling, turn these options off; the player then sits at his HQ, which is fortunately mobile.

From here, the computer works out which units are in communication with the next higher level of command. This depends on distance, time of day, weather, staff ratings and whether the Army commander is sitting quietly in a deep dark bunker or rushing around getting his head blown off.

Despite all this complexity with line of sight rules and lots of terrain types, the whole thing has been crammed into a C64, although the graphics leave a little to be desired. Hopefully, after a few more games, I might be able to pass a judgement on this one. By that time Volume Three might be out, which promises different battles and a smoother game system.



● Borodino, the epic battle of the Napoleonic era, by Peter Turcan

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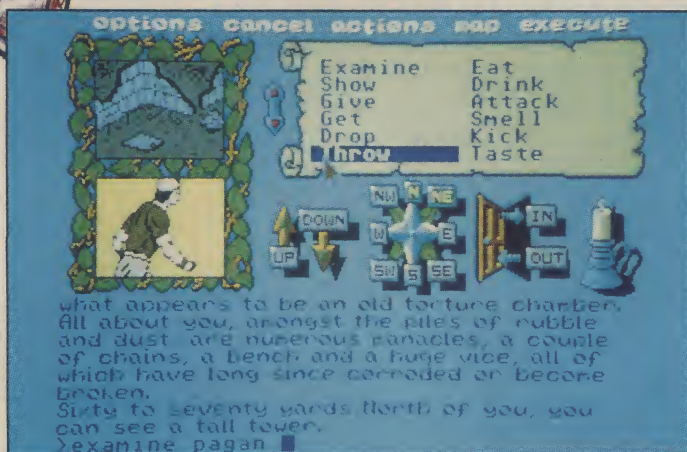
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Apolonia Software - the company that cares! (1066)

Rainbird is having great success with their **Magnetic Scrolls** stories - as well as the arcade and strategy titles from the other arms of the company - but this success shouldn't blind us to the merits of their other current adventure, **Legend of the Sword**.

This one, by Andy Storer, is called **Tales of Moments Lost**, and consists of 30-odd glossy-packed pages. I'm sure that Mr Storer is a good writer - well, he writes for ST/Amiga Format, after all! - and a quick glance shows the story to be rather more literate and self-effacing than the usual stuff. A quick glance is all that I can manage, however - I've really had enough of all these Epic Sagas of Trunchmoth and the Lesser Gods of the Southern Wastelands, even one so well-written.

But ... but ... there's always the sneaking feeling that somewhere, hidden among all the hacking and slaying, are some vital clues. In fact, the quick glance at **Moments** reveals some interesting bits that may be hidden references to the game. There's even a chapter called "A Clue from Above" - is this window-dressing, or is there something to be gleaned from the novelette after all? Ah, well, maybe I'll just have



Adventure

The game concerns the Chronicles of Anar, and of a mystical sword and shield whose magical aura protected the inhabitants of Anar for many centuries. Well, actually, it tells of the exploits of you and five other trusty adventurers in your search for them, as they have been hidden for, yay, these many yons ... The evil wizard Suzar is currently laying the land of Anar to waste, and only the enchanted S&S can defeat him.

The lavish box proclaims this as a Rainbird release. I think that they have the box size about right now, and as for the contents - well, Rainbird have never released rubbish! With the two disks come a Playguide detailing all the commands, and a machine-specific run-down of Loading and unique key functions. There's also The Necessary Novellette. Oh God, not another story of funny names to wade through! I don't think that I can take it, not even in the higher cause of the Games Weekly readership.

to grit my teeth and have a go ...

The main playing screen is divided into several sections - top left is a small pair of illustrations. These are well-drawn little cameos, and change continually, serving to emphasise and highlight the action. Some of the pictures are BIFF-BANG, while others show your character scratching his head at cross-roads, ascending stairs and so on. You'll also get the occasional Important Message when you try to do something stupid, like "But you haven't got that!".

Also on this screen is a Map - initially blank - which

alters to reflect your position and knowledge of the surrounding landscape as you explore. Middle Right is a group of icons. This is a graphic representation of your nominal Life Force, and cannons are for movement, being highlighted as exits become available. Clicking on them is a quick way to achieve movement around the compass, as well as in/out and up/down.

Along the bottom of the screen is the text area, where you'll communicate with the computer, scrolling up through this area are the usual descriptions and "What now?" cursor. Although I said "usual descriptions", they are pretty detailed and evocative, and unusually for this type of adventure, they change to reflect the passage of events - thus, passing through a clearing going south, you are told that it is "a clearing in the woods, surrounded on all sides by a dark forest, from which comes a hideous growling..." and so on. Return-

save previous games and get Help, using the HELP key if you have an ST. Other facilities include comprehensive editing of input, RAM save/load and the requisite OOPS command - on the ST, you can use the UNDO key for this, though it's undocumented. Although it seems from this that you needn't touch the keyboard in order to play the game, in fact you aren't able to access and manipulate all the objects at a location using only the options given from the menus, so typing still plays a part.

The whole thing is very easy to use and tastefully designed by Karl Buckingham who can pride himself - and does, according to the credits! - on having accomplished such a polished work of art.

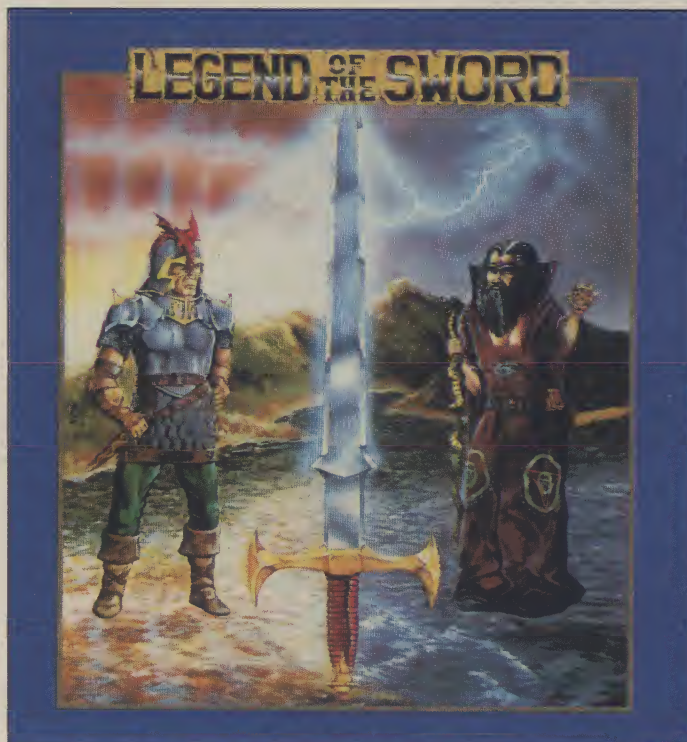
Although there are six adventurers in the band, the story appears to be conducted entirely in the first person, with control remaining firmly in the hands of your character. Occasionally

**Our resident
RPG overlord
Tony Bridge
guides you
through the
enchanted
world of
Anar.**

Bridge

ing later, you are told "This is the clearing where you heard the horrible growling..."

The program recognises all the common adventuring words - as well as some of the more uncommon, if you're in that frame of mind - and you can use the text area as usual to type them in. Alternatively, one of the drop-down menus can be pressed into action. Using the Action Menu, a command can be constructed by selecting words from a list. Using the Options Menu, you can also elect to change the screen colours, inspect a long list of credits, load and



continued from page 31

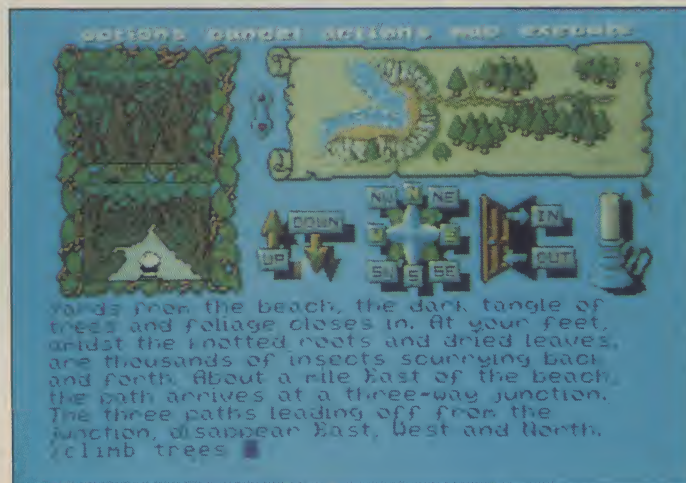
you'll find that one of the others is carrying something that is required at a certain location, and I suppose that they might come in useful to carry heavy items - and you can persuade them to do something, though they are reluctant until the puzzle requires their assistance. But, in combat, they don't appear to be of much use, and in fact you are the only one that seems inclined to do any fighting - the others just sit and watch you get your head sliced off, which happens far too often, and then the adventure ends! Of course, the programmers are cleverer than this might lead you to believe, and some of the puzzles do indeed need inter-character co-operation.

You start the adventure with "a heavy broadsword", but this seems pretty useless in combat and very fragile, too, snapping at the slightest excuse, leaving you with bare hands only. In fact, repeated combat eventually bears fruit, as in real life, and persevering will pay dividends - as in any decent Role-Playing game, combat becomes less one-sided as one gains experience.

So fighting Orcs and Humanoids is a good idea, particularly as they seem to carry lots of plunderable weapons - the rest of the party quite content, however, to stand back and just share in the spoils without doing much to help.

Time plays an important part in the adventure, as it does in the Novelette. As you wander about the landscape, you'll be told just how long it takes you to get from place to place, which adds a nice bit of realism to the proceedings and along with the changing location descriptions, helps to create the atmosphere. However, my band has now been following me about, trustingly, for several hours, and must be getting hungry and thirsty - apart from a swig of the strong stuff near the start, there's not much food or drink, apart from a clump of Big Melons, a handful of winkles and a gigantic Red Herring!

Adventure Bridge



The dreaded "You are thirsty . . ." must surely raise its ugly head before long!

There are, as far as I can see, no spelling mistakes, and just a couple of instances of sloppy typing. The attractive presentation is let down a little by the amount of disk access - each location (or more precisely, each new section of the map) is loaded in from disc and it can get a little tedious.

The origins of *Legend of the Sword* can be traced back in a straight line to the ancient 8-bit *Sagas of Woe and Trolls*, but a lot has been learnt in the intervening years about presentation. Although I find the adventure lacking in depth, the graphics and user interface are certainly managed with great assurance, and the story is certainly gripping enough to make you want to carry on deeper into the game. I hope that the basic shell of the program can be used for other stories and that Rainbird, Karl Buckingham and his team will go on to produce other adventures using the same system.

I've been speaking to one of the designers of *Legend*, and I've managed to squeeze some hints from him. I've run out of room this week, but next week I'll bring you the low-down from the land of Anar.

NICK '88



Any film starring Sylvester Stallone seems to draw people in in their millions. Goodness knows why, but there it is. Unfortunately *Rambo III* will be no exception.

Well, Old John Rambo's back, uglier and musclier than ever, but this is the only modification to the all too familiar format as the plot is exactly the same as the previous "Rambo" (at least its consistent), only this time it has our hero beating the entire Russian army in Afghanistan single handed. The fact that the Russians have now pulled out doesn't stop old Sly. Let's be honest, what does?

The film opens with a stick fight, after which (having won), Rambo returns to the Buddhist monastery, where he is residing, to contemplate his navel. He is followed by an old army friend Colonel Trautman (Richard Crenna) who begs him to help the Afghan freedom fighters, but John is tired of war and refuses, preferring to work for the Buddhists by day and stick fight by night.

However, once Trautman is captured by the Soviets, Rambo becomes mean and angry – you can tell this by the way his cheeks puff in and out – and embarks on a one-man mission to rescue the Colonel. There follows a full twenty,



On SCREEN

● John Rambo – Fighting for truth, justice and the American way!

Fast forward through the latest film releases. This week Emma Norman gets physical with *Rambo III*.

tedious, minutes wherein the Afghani-stans tell of the vile treatment they have received: Russians giving their children toys with bombs in, raping their women and generally being as unpleasant as only the Americans can perceive them.

From there on, if you have seen *Rambo II* you have seen *Rambo III*.

Gratuitous violence abounds, as does bad acting and dangerous propaganda. The film was co-written by Stallone, and to give him credit, he did try to inject some humour, but as you might expect there was only one funny line and that was meant to be serious; when the Russian leader, despairing of the way Rambo has eluded him once again, asks of the Colonel: "Who is this John Rambo? God?" To which the friend replies, "No, God would have mercy, Rambo won't."

If only Columbia would have mercy on the film-going public and stop making such rubbish, but doubtless there are some people who enjoy watching mindless violence and mindless films.

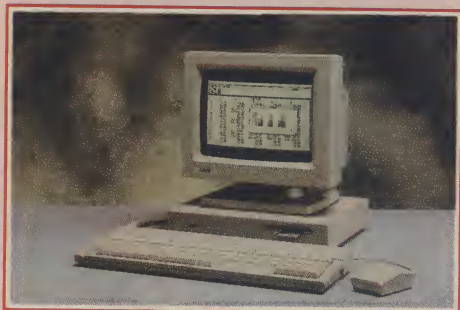


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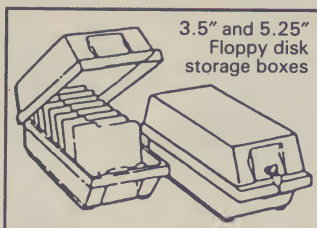
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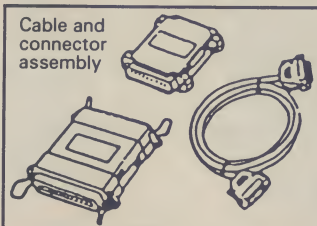
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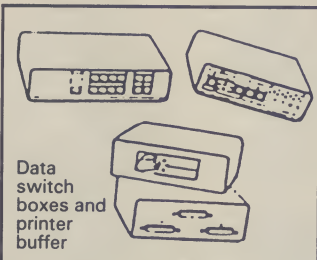
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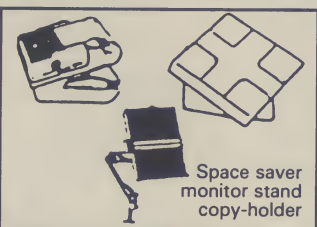
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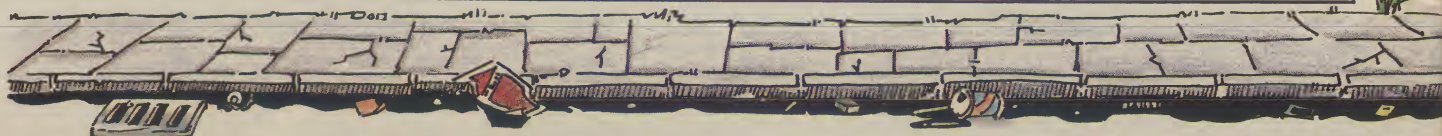
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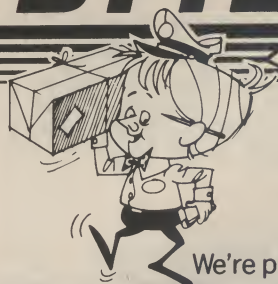
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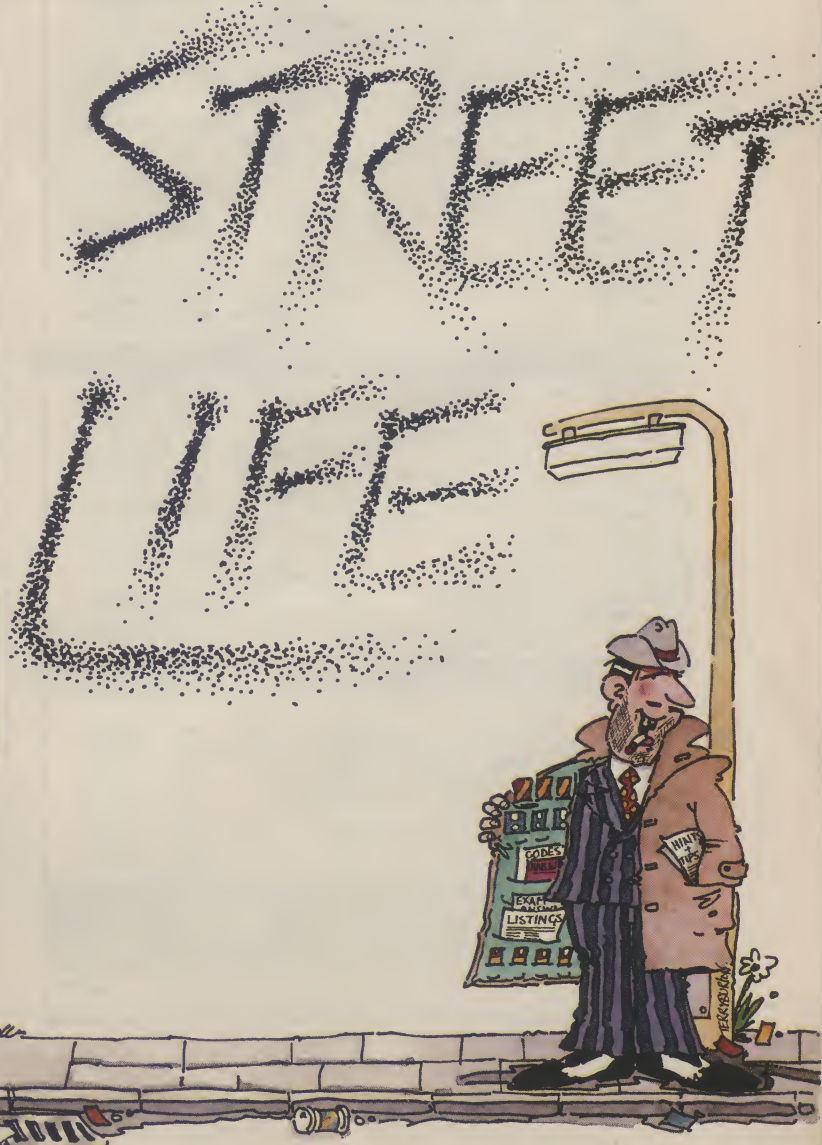
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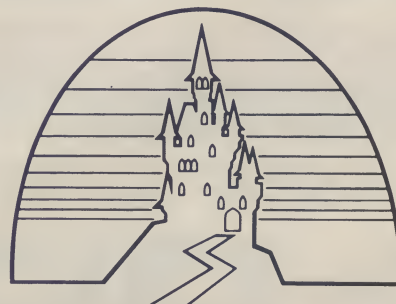
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Ever wonder who thinks up the names for arcade games? Someone at Taito really screwed up with **Continental Circus**. Not that there's anything wrong with the game – on the contrary, it's brilliant – but it doesn't exactly sound like a car racing game, does it?

Never mind. Seek out **Continental Circus** as soon as you can, especially if you still think **Pole Position II** is the state of the art in Grand Prix simulations. In its stand-up or sit-down forms it makes previous race games about as entertaining as pushing a shopping trolley around Sainsburys. It doesn't have quite the gadget appeal of Konami's **WEC 24 Hours**, nor does it make you seasick by flinging you bodily up and down, but it more than makes up for this by working in 3D. At first the screen looks broken, as the picture shimmers from side to side. But take a peek through the polarising goggles attached to the cabinet and the whole scene snaps into three-dimensional glory.

From then on you're dealing with a game that plays very much like **Pole Position**, but with eight circuits in different countries. Starting in Brazil, you get to race your way around the world only if you put up a good enough performance.

The graphics and sound are all you would expect from a #1 play, with several nice touches including pit stops, flying debris from crashing opponents, lurid sparks as your low-slung chassis ground out on the crests, and a yawning, tingling sen-



sation in the pit of your stomach as you fly over the yumps on some of the more gut-wrenching circuits. If you have so much as a drop of 4-star in your veins, seek it out now!

After all that excitement, **Kuri**

it into a letter-coded star: ramming this gives you a weapons upgrade according to the letter. In contrast to the set-up in **Nemesis**, though, the upgrades are not cumulative – you lose the previous weapon when

White line nightmare

Francis Jago explores the neon dens of the arcade scene. This week he looks at Grand Prix simulations.

Kinton is a bit of a let-down. This Taito offering is basically your bog-standard martial arts game, nicely presented with pretty pictures, but fundamentally fairly old-fashioned. You get the usual joystick, jump button and kick/punch button to use as you fight your way down a subterranean labyrinth and the opposition gradually gets tougher. I'm lousy at these games, and even I could play for a good long while without getting wiped out.

P-47, from Jaleco, turns out to be fairly unoriginal, too. If you've ever played Konami's **Nemesis**, you will find the gameplay familiar. The setting is a little different, however. Your WW2 P-47 fighter has to shoot, bomb and generally disrupt anything coming down the pike, against air, land and sea targets. Taking out an enemy chopper turns

you win the next one. Like **Kuri-Kinton**, it is technically competent but pretty bland after a while.

This Rambo-style fantasy employs an upright cabinet fitted with a dummy machine gun allowing the player to blast his way through a fast-moving and bloody commando mission to rescue hostages.

The game moves through six stages: an army base, jungle, a native village, an arms depot, the prison and an airport. At each stage enemy characters, including tanks and helicopters, zoom around the screen appearing to move directly towards the player as they attack. The perspective and background scenery are excellent, and this game would seem to be a natural for adaptation to the spectacular 3D system seen in **Continental Circus**. How about it, Taito?



Arcade ACE



Brandon Gore comes face to face with the future in 'Crash' – the Computer Generated Graphic Novel.

Imagine a cross between the late reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes, Alan Sugar and Daley Thompson, then add futuristic body armour, weapons systems and power-assisted muscles – that's Marvel Comics' Iron Man.

Iron Man, as dedicated comics fans will already know, is the alter ego of Tony Stark, head of the Stark International Corporation and general super hero. He is also the subject of *Crash*, 'the first computer generated graphic novel' produced by Mike Saenz and William Bates.

Tony Stark, aka Iron Man, has decided to release the technical secrets of his body armour – SAV or Somatic Amplification Vehicle – to the Japanese company Eson. This is to help advance science and technology around the world, rather than restrict its use to one ageing super hero.

The story line is set some time in the future after Iron Man's heyday – now he is best known as a cartoon character who advertises a popular breakfast cereal. The notorious chip wars are over, but an underground battle still rages for control of information technology. US artificial intelligence techniques are being pirated, though no one can identify the culprits.

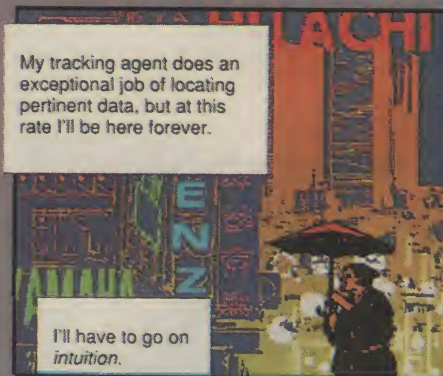
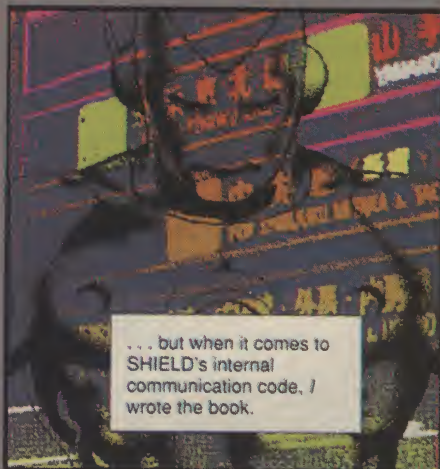
Ex SHIELD director, Colonel Nick Fury (remember the World War II commando?), is brought out of retirement to track down the villains. He tries to talk Stark out of his plans for distributing the SAV technology, but fails. Stark survives an assassination attempt and discovers his technology has been misused by Hiro Matsui, No 2 at Eson. With the aid of IM2, a SAV equipped robot, Stark

defeats Matsui and his illegally produced SAV Samurai warriors. But, while thwarting Matsui's plans, Stark loses control of IM2. The robot develops free will and appoints itself as a guardian over the whole of mankind.

If this seems a little disjointed, it reflects the nature of the storyline. There are some really good ideas fighting to get out in *Crash*, but they suffer from a lack of sharp editing and some verbose dialogue. Nevertheless, *Crash* is an impressive first effort. The graphics, drawn on an Apple Mac II, are imaginative and colourful in the extreme. Technically, the comic is a masterpiece and provides more than a pointer to what is already possible in the comics field. The graphics were created on *ComicWorks* – a commercial program developed by *Crash* co-producer Mike Saenz – and imported into another program *Lithographer* for colour blending. Pro 3D was used to create 3D models for the robots and the Shield Levicarrier, while Adobe Illustrator provided the really complex graphics used on the front cover.

The technology used to produce the comic is almost as interesting as that portrayed in *Crash*, but this is both a strength and a weakness. Fascinating as the technology is, it should be an adjunct to the characters and plot – it should never be allowed to replace it. While Mike Saenz and Bill Bates avoid that trap, extra care in the storyboard phase of production could have produced a mindblowing comic. But this is perhaps quibbling. *Crash* is still fascinating and would adorn any comic fan's collection. Buy it!

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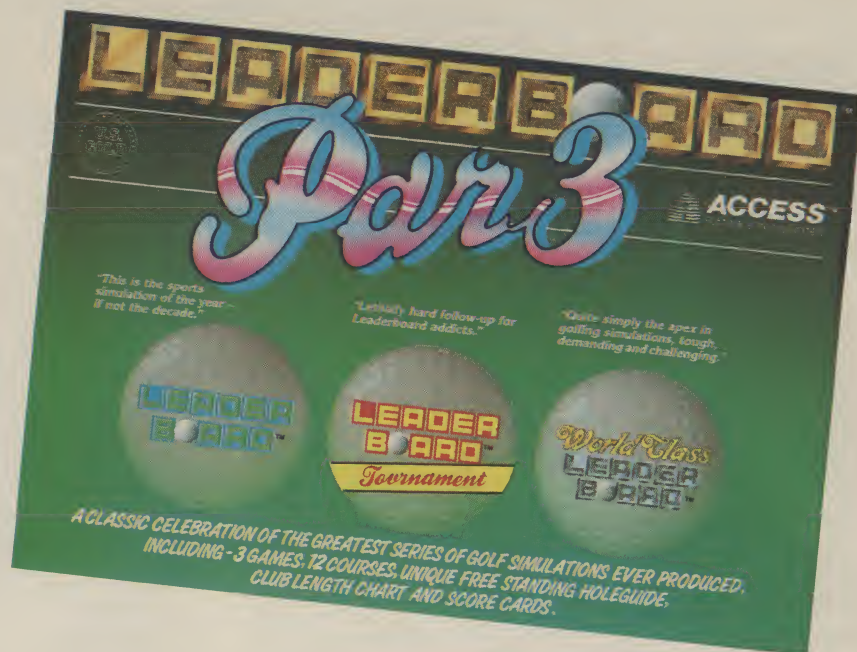
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5 MINSTER CLOSE
RAYLEIGH, ESSEX

Welcome to CIA the Computer Information Agency. Where each week we will be relieving your frustrations (Sorry only the computer games related ones) by guiding you gently through the trouble spots of certain rather tricky areas. We are also offering £10 for every hint or tip you send in and a staggeringly generous £30 for the star tip of the week, so get writing now to: CIA, Computer Games Week, Focus Publications, Greencoat House, 15 Francis Street, London SW1P 1DG.

Having experienced all kinds of difficulties with my swing in **Leaderboard** on the ST version, I finally discovered how to get some real power behind the shots. Instead of merely pressing once on the fire button at the



required moment just keep pushing down on it and it is then a case of Eat your heart out Arnold Palmer as the ball goes soaring off into the sunset.

Venom strikes back – **Mask III**, can be a real problem if you aren't au fait with the Teleport passwords, so to help you cheat a little I have kindly decided to list some.

PETALS OF DOOM (which will also get you a new weapon), MAYHEM, level one, TRANSMOGRIFY, level two and VALKYR, level three. Hope these help.

Also, still on **Mask III**, at the beginning, pick up both the penetrator and the backlash masks then run to your right until you come to a door, whatever you do though don't use the penetrator until you have gone through the door but save it to go through the wall to

your left, you will then be in another room with two more masks, collect them and jump at the wall again using your penetrator to go through, turn right and run until you see the jackrabbit mask, stand over it and use your penetrator while picking it up.

Overly generous of me to impart so much information in one go, but this is Computer Games Week and we do so love helping out.

A fine tip for **Bubble Ghost** fans; when you get into the second level with the candle in the middle of your screen, before doing anything else go up to the candle and blow it out. It makes for a much easier game.

For those of you who have experienced problems in getting up to higher levels in **Oblivion**, simply press 1 2 Z X C V all

together and you'll automatically go on to the next level.

One more tip and then I really must go before I give away all the secrets and do the games programmers out of a job. In **Ninja**, it is best to hit those bad old thugs with body punches as they are rather vulnerable in such places and never throw things at the **Ninja** themselves as they are liable to hurl them back again.



If you think you could collate hints and tips and write this column on a weekly basis then write to: **The Editor, Computer Games Week**, at the above address. Enclosing samples of your written work.

LETTERS

I have just got a Commodore 64 for my birthday. One of my friends said that I must not borrow software because my computer would catch a virus and die. I am very worried about this. Is it true?

A. Hall, Eastbourne.

Ed says: What your friend is on about is the Amiga virus. I have yet to hear of one on the C64 but I have it on good authority that if you copy or pirate software your joystick will fall off.

I have written this block busting game and want to make lots of money, but not get ripped off. Have you any tips on how I go about this?

H. White.

Ed says: Sure, send your game to me and if it's any good I'll give you a tenner for it.

Seriously though, it's best to first ring up the various software houses and explain what your game is like (adventure, arcade conversion, etc.) and what machine it runs on. If they are interested, arrange a meeting to show them your game personally.

Never send unsolicited tapes and discs to people as they are likely to end up in the bin.

If a software house does make you an offer, make sure it's a formal contract and get a solicitor to check it for you before signing anything.

It's unlikely that you'll make a fortune, but you never know, your game could be the next *Elite* or *Out Run*.



Dear Gamesweek, I am fed up with the quality of joysticks. I am games mad and in the last year I have gone through 3 joysticks, with the last biting the dust last night. Can you recommend a joystick that can stand the punishing attack that it will get from a real games freak?

P. Woodley, Knutsfield.

Ed says: My personal fave stick is the Cheetah Mach One which is sturdy, has loads of fire buttons, and rather essentially, an auto-fire switch.

Dear Duncan, I am hooked on *Afterburner*. It is fab, but it's taking all my pocket money. Please, please, can you look in your crystal ball and tell me when this brill game will be converted to my Atari ST?

Freaky, London N15.

Ed says: Activision is doing the conversion to home computers, and according to the PR dept. it should be available on the ST in November.

Hey, Mr or Mrs Reviewer, I think there is something seriously wrong with your scoring system. After reading your review of Eddie Edwards' *Ski Jump* which got 85% overall I spent £10 of my paper round money on what turns out to be a really naff game. I also have *Winter Games*, which gives you many winter events including the ski jump. I think this is much better value.

S. Smith, Sheffield.

*Ed says: Our reviewer liked it, but if you didn't you should have played it in the shop first. Reviews are very subjective, so one woman's meat can often be another man's poison. Personally I found Eddie to be fairly humorous, whereas *Winter Games* was unsmilingly serious.*

As a regular reader of Gamesweek, yes, I was the one who bought your first issue. I would like to compliment you on your excellent adventure column. Many of the adventures that I had given up for dead now have a new lease of life. Keep up the good work. PS, any chance of a hot line for adventurers at the end of their tether?

J. Lane, Coventry.

Ed says: If you get stuck, write to our man in the pixie suit, Tony Bridge, and he'll sort you out.

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